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FSTC Newsletter

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The Faculty Scholarship & Teaching Center Newsletter

A Note from the Editor

By Dr. Christopher White



Welcome to this fourth issue of the *FSTC Newsletter*. The *Newsletter* is designed to help us, members of the GSU faculty community, stay connected with all the faculty development events and initiatives happening here on campus. The *Newsletter* also provides a way for faculty to share ideas that might be of general interest to us all as teachers and scholars.

Teri Sosa, Director of the Faculty Scholarship and Teaching Center, begins our issue with a brief look back at the wide range of exciting and engaging faculty development events the Center has put on this year, along with a

sneak peek at this June's Faculty Summer Institute.

Also in this issue you'll read about an innovative program for fostering mindful pedagogy at GSU, as well as a reflection by Humanities and Social Sciences Division Chair, Andrae Marak, on first-year faculty orientation, and a new University Library initiative designed to help faculty publish and archive their work.

If you or your colleagues are planning any faculty-development related speaker, activity, or workshop, let us know—we'll help you publicize it. Also, if you'd like to propose a short article for a future issue, we would love to hear from you! Email me at cwhite@govst.edu, or Teri Sosa at tsosa@govst.edu. Enjoy!

A Note from the Director

By Dr. Teri Sosa



Greetings Colleagues,

It has been a busy year for the FSTC! Our offerings for AY13-14 have included programs on, to name a few: Writing Across the Curriculum, Service Learning, How to Use the Library, Universal Design, The Scholarship of Teaching, Research for Civic Engagement, and How to Recognize Scholarly Journals.

In addition the Center has sponsored "extended orientation" lunches for first-year (and occasionally second-year) faculty on the first Tuesday of each month, as well as an adjunct orientation dinner and anti-harassment training. We have also partnered with Student

Services to create service learning mini grants.

If you weren't able to attend any programs this year, I encourage you to check out our future events. The FSTC has something to offer everyone!

Next on the horizon is the Faculty Summer Institute, to be held on June 3rd and 4th. This year the Center for Online Teaching and Learning is collaborating with the FSTC to produce an expanded Summer Institute. Our theme for this year's FSI is Re-imagining Education for the 21st Century. While we will continue to offer presentations on technology topics, we will be adding presentations that are geared toward innovative pedagogy and research.

The FSI will also feature two nationally recognized speakers. Our keynote speaker on June 3rd will be [Eric Stoller](#), who will speak about digital identity and using social media in the classroom. Our plenary speaker on June 4th will be Diane Dean. [Dr. Dean](#) is co-author of *Generation on a Tightrope*. She will speak to us about the new generation of college students, a particularly appropriate topic as we prepare for our new freshmen.

Thank you for all of your support this year—it has been exciting. I know next year will be even better!

Please feel free to contact me (tsosa@govst.edu) with comments, ideas, and suggestions.

Mindful Pedagogy at GSU

By Dr. Maristela Zell and Dr. Tim Pedigo



Governors State University is experiencing unprecedented change and renewal. In the fall we will welcome our first freshman class. This change has led to a search for a solid foundation in values-based teaching and learning. Throughout this transformation period, a group of instructors have carried out contemplative practices

and activities for faculty, staff and students. These activities have included weekly meditation sessions, mindfulness retreats, yearly symposia on mindfulness, and the establishment of the Mindfulness and Psychotherapy Certificate Program in the summer of 2013.

GSU faculty and students continue to express interest in integrating contemplative activities in the classroom but have yet to receive any guidance and support for their interests. Dr. Maristela Zell (Social Work) and Dr. Timothy Pedigo (Psychology) have spearheaded the effort to stimulate exploration of contemplative pedagogies in the classroom. These instructors have now partnered with the recently reorganized Faculty Scholarship and Teaching Center (FSTC) to request funding from the Association for Contemplative Mind in Higher Education (ACMHE).

Funding from ACMHE will provide FSTC the needed support to establish training for faculty to integrate these activities in their curriculum in an intentional, consistent, and systematic fashion. If awarded the funds, Dr. Zell, Dr. Pedigo, and Dr. Sosa (Director of FSTC) expect to launch the program in the fall of 2014. Goals for the program include: (1) establishing a learning community comprised of faculty from various disciplines to integrate contemplative

pedagogic practices across the curriculum, and (2) exposing a larger number of students to contemplative practices.

Dr. Zell, Dr. Pedigo, and Dr. Sosa expect that this initiative will assist in the creation of a supportive community of contemplative scholars within the university. In addition, these instructors expect that the learning community will develop course materials that integrate contemplative practices in various disciplines and that can be disseminated, replicated, or serve as examples of resources for future faculty. Most importantly, this initiative has the potential to improve classroom learning and foster students' growth as whole persons.

Our vision is to make GSU one of the leading universities in mindfulness-based education in our region. The more faculty, students, and staff who show interest in developing mindfulness, the more a sense of community will arise that fosters connectedness, deep inquiry, and personal learning and growth.

Some Reflections on First-Year Faculty Orientation

By Dr. Andrae Marak, Division Chair of Humanities and Social Sciences, CAS



I like to tell the story about when I landed my first tenure-track job. I was not the first choice of the department chair. In spite of that, she created a positive, affirming space for me within the department and served as one of my early mentors. Other members of my department, college, and university also gave me needed advice and support. In this respect, my most important mentors were the twenty-two other new hires who arrived the same fall as I did. These were the people that I often felt most comfortable sharing my troubles with. How were they adjusting to a 4/4 teaching load? Were they having issues with students coming to class unprepared? If so, what did they do about it? How were they balancing teaching with their research? I should mention one other thing: I never did get much formal advice on teaching. I understood that teaching was supposed to be student-centered, but much of the learning that I had gone through as a student had been professor-centered.

It is in this vein that I have tried to recreate some of the best parts of my own introduction to the life of a full-time teacher-scholar for the seven new members that the Division of Humanities and Social Sciences was lucky enough to hire last year. I have tried to do this while also avoiding the obstacles to success inside and outside of the classroom that I faced. My program works like this. I purchased several copies of Robert Boice's *Advice for New Faculty Members: Nihil Nimus*. I like Boice's work because it is a good reminder that excellent teaching is more a matter of mindfulness and pacing than content mastery. I then invited our new faculty to an opening meeting in September where I gave them each a copy, offered to answer any of their immediate questions and concerns, discussed what the university's expectations were, and suggested that we meet several more times during the academic year.

We would have two types of meetings. The first type of meeting would involve a faculty-led discussion of one portion of *Advice for New Faculty Members*. For example, Ben Almassi led the first discussion on teaching, where we shared our own strengths and weaknesses as teachers and what we wanted to work on in relation to Boice's suggestions about how to moderate one's preparation for teaching, how to stay positive, and how to pace oneself in the

classroom. The second type of meeting would be low stakes research presentations of work in progress. At these meetings we would focus on providing positive feedback as much as possible so as to create an affirming atmosphere where everyone felt comfortable sharing their work, regardless of what stage it was at. I purposely attended only the first few of the meetings. I wanted new faculty to have their own sense of community and togetherness, and I wanted to provide them with a space to discuss issues that they might not be comfortable discussing in my presence.

In addition to regular meetings and research workshops, I engaged with faculty one-on-one to provide them with formative assessments of their teaching. These assessments involve a pre-observation meeting, a classroom observation, and a post-observation meeting. It is in these meetings that we explore the best practices of student-centered learning and how these practices might best align with the goals, objectives, and personalities of individual instructors.

In sum, Governors State University is lucky to have such talented new faculty, and I am in the fortunate position of being able to learn as much about teaching and learning from our new faculty as they (hopefully) learn from me.

Library Renews Support for Scholarly Communications and Open Access

By Paul Blobaum, Full Professor, University Library



In March, I was assigned the newly created role of Scholarly Communications Librarian. The two main responsibilities I have in this role are to provide leadership for establishing and building a new open-access scholarly repository and archive, and to support scholarly communications among faculty, staff, and students. I will have the assistance of two library staff, Sarah Wegley and Erin Engelbrecht.

The University Library has joined the Digital Commons Network, a community of institutional repositories hosted by [Bepress \(Berkeley Electronic Press\)](http://network.bepress.com/). The entire repository network can be searched by using the portal at <http://network.bepress.com/>. The GSU repository is named OPUS, which stands for Open Portal to University Scholarship. OPUS will be published on the Internet at <http://opus.govst.edu>. OPUS is currently in the design and build process and should be available for production work later in May.

OPUS ushers in a new era of digital archives and open access publishing at GSU. Faculty work such as journal article preprints (the final accepted peer-reviewed manuscript) and postprints (the edited published version of the article) can be archived permanently. OPUS will enable faculty to comply with the new Illinois Open Access to Research Articles Act, in compliance with policies currently under development by the GSU Open Access Committee.

There are three ways that the Library can support the archiving of faculty work:

1. Mediated: We will do it for you. Send us your CV, and we will identify archiving rights from the publisher(s) using SHERPA/Romeo (a directory of journal publisher

- permissions), and download and post the article(s) to OPUS, and give you a report;
2. Direct upload: You register for an OPUS account, and submit your work yourself; or more likely,
 3. Collaboration: You give us a CV, we find post-prints that we can archive from your citations list, and then you can upload your manuscripts for those journals that only permit the archiving of preprints.

In addition, Digital Commons supports many other formats and items, such as working papers, digital monographs, presentations, abstracts, research data sets, and conference programs and proceedings. An unlimited number of magazines and journals can be published by GSU faculty. OPUS will archive the intellectual output of faculty and preserve it permanently in digital format. Complete usage statistics are automatically forwarded to authors and other content contributors on a regular basis.

OPUS will also support student work, from theses and capstone projects, to magazines, journals, creative media and publications, and student research conferences. A pilot project of electronic theses is planned with the College of Arts and Sciences.

I also would be more than happy to consult with you about any aspects of the scholarly communications process, in partnership with my Library faculty colleagues. I can advise you on identifying publishing opportunities in reputable journals, and help you avoid publishing scams. Although the roles and responsibilities of the Scholarly Communications Librarian will evolve over time, my staff and I look forward to helping you in any way we can. (I will also continue to coordinate the Reference department, and serve as liaison to the College of Health and Human Services programs for the immediate future.)

Please contact me at 708-534-4139, or pblobaum@govst.edu to discuss how OPUS can help you preserve your legacy. My office is in C2310, up the C Wing elevator.